

September 4, 2018

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St SW, Washington, DC 20554

To whom it may concern:

The National Hispanic Council on Aging (NHCOA) is in strong support of the expansion of 5G infrastructure. As you are aware, Hispanic older adults are the fastest growing segment of the U.S. In fact, Hispanic older adults will comprise the largest ethnically diverse population in the next 20 years, meaning we need to continue to close the digital divide making the 5G infrastructure vital from both economic and societal perspectives. NHCOA strives to empower Hispanic older adults, their families, and caregivers and 5G infrastructure can help us achieve that mission.

NHCOA is known for its ability to reach and serve its community in a linguistically, culturally and age-appropriate manner, bridging gaps in language, culture, formal education and age. NHCOA also understands the needs and challenges facing Hispanic communities and has chosen its programmatic priorities to reflect critical issues facing Hispanic older adults. Those key programmatic priorities are:

- health,
- economic security,
- housing, and
- leadership development and empowerment.

We see the expansion of 5G infrastructure assisting us in all of those priorities. With regards to health, 5G can support telemedicine and mobile health – reaching seniors in insolated and rural areas allowing them to easily monitor their health and manage treatments. This infrastructure would make it easier for providers to remotely evaluate, diagnose and treat older adults where they are most comfortable, in their own homes. In the areas of economic security and housing, 5G has enormous potential to aid in independent living solutions for older adults, their families and caregivers. Older adults will be empowered to remain in their homes through devices that integrate housekeeping functions over a connected platform, thereby reducing caregiving burdens. For seniors that are unable to drive, autonomous cars symbolize a recovered independence.

The reasons highlighted above are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the potential benefits of 5G infrastructure. However, to achieve these benefits, leaders, at all levels of government, must do their respective parts to ensure 5G infrastructure success. Government officials need to modernize/streamline infrastructure rules and work with the private sector, allowing for the rapid deployment of 5G across the country. This will support the closing of the digital divide. Outdated regulations only serve to widen the

digital divide and impede the buildout of new national 5G networks, delaying important technologies reaching those most in need.

When wireless providers have a high cost of doing business in certain areas, less resources can be directed outward in a timely manner – further delaying deployment of 5G in needed areas. By creating a hospitable environment for deployment of 5G, all communities benefit, including the most vulnerable ones, like rural and isolated Hispanic communities. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has made notable strides to modernize the wireless infrastructure policy to better position the US to be 5G ready and win the race to 5G. However, the race is not over and there is more to do. The FCC must continue building a framework that streamlines regulations to put America, and its older adults, in a winning position.

NHCOA is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization based in Washington, D.C. and established in 1979. NHCOA has a nearly 40-year history of working to improve the quality of life of Hispanic older adults, their families and caregivers. From its inception, NHCOA activities have reflected its philosophy of empowering Hispanic older adults to advocate for the resources and services that are their right.

Thank you for allowing us to support this effort. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yanira Cruz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Yanira Cruz, DrPH, MPH
President & CEO